



# *Options For Future Management*

*Dear Friend of Apostle Islands National Lakeshore:*

*A little more than a year ago, we held several meetings around Wisconsin and Minnesota to discuss the revision of the General Management Plan for Apostle Islands National Lakeshore. As you may recall, National Park Service (NPS) general management plans are very broad planning documents that create a vision for the park for the next 15 to 20 years. This new management plan will address wilderness issues for the first time because of the designation of the Gaylord Nelson Wilderness in late 2004.*

*We have learned a lot about the issues that are important to you, and we have given the issues a lot of thought ourselves. As we prepare to begin drafting this important plan for the park, we invite you to review the issues and some different options for addressing them. Once we have a complete list of issues, each with a broad range of options, we will define planning alternatives and prepare a Draft General Management Plan / Wilderness Management Plan/ Environmental Impact Statement for your review.*

*This newsletter highlights several issues that we believe are appropriate for the general management plan to address, and outlines several different approaches to each of the issues. We want to hear from you! Is the list of issues complete? Is there a reasonable, legal option for approaching a particular issue that we have missed? Do you prefer any particular approach to an issue? Any thoughts that you can share with us along these lines would be extremely valuable to us.*

*We'll be hosting several meetings around the region this summer to listen to your views and gather input for the plan. (Please see page 22 for the schedule.) Help us decide what the Apostle Islands National Lakeshore will look like 20 years from now. We hope you'll stay engaged in this important planning process by reviewing this newsletter, attending a meeting, and sending us your comments.*

*Sincerely,*

**Bob Krumenaker**  
**Superintendent**



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## SUMMARY OF WHAT WE HEARD ON ISSUES FACING THE PARK

The general management planning process for Apostle Islands National Lakeshore began in October 2004 when we asked the public to tell us the primary issues and concerns the general management plan (GMP) should address. The planning team published a newsletter requesting public input, and held public meetings in Bayfield, Ashland, Madison, St. Paul, Duluth, Red Cliff, and Odanah. A meeting was also held with the park staff to get their views.

About 40 people attended the public meetings, and 40 written responses (nine from organizations) were received in response to the October 2004 scoping newsletter. A variety of issues and concerns were identified, with no one issue standing out. People who wrote comments most frequently mentioned they don't want to see the park built up with new developments or other human intrusions. The two greatest concerns for the park's future were overcrowding/overuse and pressure to develop more facilities. Some people were concerned about noise within and outside the park, and the need to maintain opportunities for quiet and solitude on the islands. A number of comments focused on facilities, including the need to maintain outhouses, develop/improve facilities (e.g., campgrounds, docks), and complete the Lakeshore Trail. Some questioned how much effort was being devoted to maintaining the lighthouses and other historic properties on Sand Island, such as the West Bay Club. Several people brought up natural



*Apostle Islands trail*

resource concerns, including the need to manage deer, to consider bears in planning, and to protect the ecological resources of Long Island. Other concerns mentioned included fees (pro and con), the need for more park staff (e.g., law enforcement), the islands becoming less accessible to boaters, too much regulation, treaty rights, noise, commercial fishing, the impacts of visitors (e.g., unleashed pets, beach fires, and degradation of wilderness character), and the need to protect all of the Long Island barrier spit.

A 2004 visitor survey was another source of information the planning team considered in identifying park issues and concerns. Although most respondents rated the overall quality of facilities and services at the park as "good or very good," there were several points that

### Purpose Statements of Apostle Islands National Lakeshore

Purpose statements are based on the park's legislation, legislative history and NPS policies. The statements reaffirm the reasons for which the park was set aside as a unit of the national park system and provide the foundation for the park's management and use.

The purposes of Apostle Islands National Lakeshore are to:

- **Conserve and protect** the outstanding collection of scenic, scientific, biological, geological, historical, archeological, cultural, and wilderness features and values of Apostle Islands National Lakeshore.

- **Provide opportunities** for the benefit, inspiration, education, recreational use, and enjoyment of Apostle Islands National Lakeshore.

- **Secure the benefits** of an enduring resource of wilderness in Apostle Islands National Lakeshore's Gaylord Nelson Wilderness for present and future generations of Americans.



*Meyers Beach*

### Key Issues Being Considered in the General Management Plan

Based on public and park staff input, the planning team identified seven key issues it believes the general management plan needs to focus on. These issues are described on pages 6-20 of the newsletter. A basic issue, which underlies and affects all of the above issues, is:

- How can the National Park Service effectively and efficiently manage the park in an era of tightening budgets?

detracted from their experiences. Some conditions in the park that had a negative effect on visitor experiences included crowding at parking lots and docks, litter, and visible signs of human waste. Some of the suggestions for improvements included improved hiking trails at Meyers Beach and on some of the islands, new/improved campsites at Little Sand Bay and Sand Island, new picnic facilities on Stockton Island, dock improvements at Devils and South Twin Islands, and new/improved restrooms at Little Sand Bay, Meyers Beach, and Sand and Stockton Islands. (If you are interested in reading more about the visitor survey, you can find it on the Internet at [www.psu.uidaho.edu/vsp.reports](http://www.psu.uidaho.edu/vsp.reports).)

### MANAGEMENT OPTIONS TO BE CONSIDERED IN THE GENERAL MANAGEMENT PLAN

As you probably know, today we are in a tight budget environment. Costs are rising faster than budgets, and despite our best efforts at reducing costs, increasing efficiencies, and focusing on the most important things our service levels have been declining in recent years. Like many parks, the Apostle Islands National Lakeshore staff is unable to do all that it has done in the past (e.g., monitor resource conditions, maintain visitor facilities, provide visitor programs, staff visitor centers, etc.). Maintaining existing conditions will require more funds than what the park now receives. There is little reason to expect that this funding environment is likely to change over at least the next 10 years. But in the meantime, the park staff is also confronting all of the following issues. As a result, difficult



*Sea Caves*

decisions need to be made on where to focus the park's staff and resources.

The planning team has identified different options or actions to address each of the seven issues that follow. We would like to know which options you would support being taken in Apostle Islands National Lakeshore. In other words, if you were in the superintendent's shoes, which of these options would you select to address the issues confronting the park — and why would you select these options and not others? You will be asked these questions in the comment form at the end of the newsletter.

To assist you in understanding all the issues that begin on page 6, we first describe the background of the challenges facing the park.



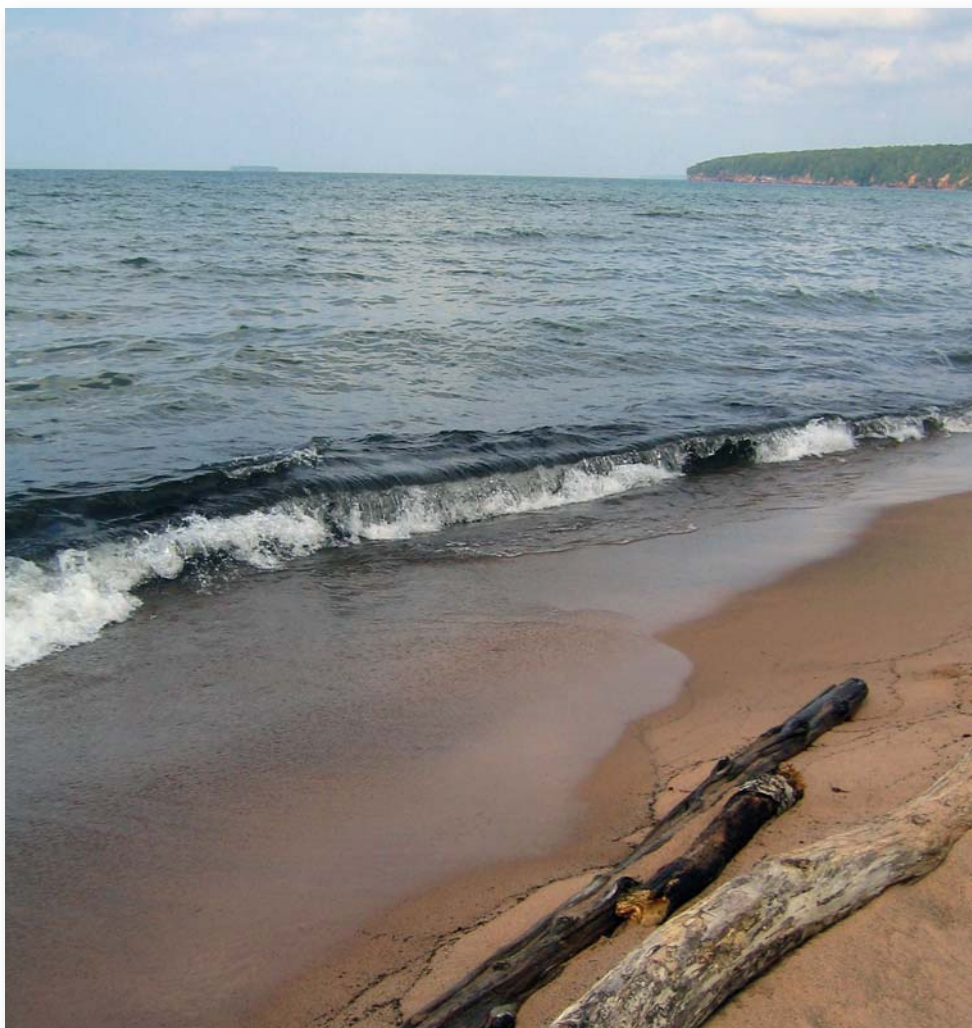
*Crosscountry skier at Basswood Island*



We also identify “givens,” which apply to all of the options being considered for an issue. These givens reflect legal requirements, NPS management policies, and administrative commitments that have been made. Some general options are then identified that could be taken to address each of the issues.

Keep in mind the following points when reading the issues and options:

- We cannot do all of the options being proposed here. We need to prioritize which options for each issue best satisfies the purposes of the park and maintains the park’s significance, and more generally, we need to decide which option is in the best interest of the American public.
- While all of the options could work, they have different implications for the future of the park in terms of resource management, visitor opportunities, facilities (construction and/or maintenance), and operation/administration of the park.
- Cost is an important factor to consider in determining which option to select. There is a cost for all of the options, even continuing current management. But cost should not be the only factor considered in determining whether or not to select an option. For instance, it may be possible for the National Park Service to pursue a partnership with another entity, such as another governmental/tribal agency or a nongovernmental organization, to share costs and make some of the options more feasible.
- Some of the options listed under an issue are mutually exclusive; other options may overlap.
- All issues and options will respect the reserved treaty rights of the Ojibwe people (see text box on this page).



Lake Superior

### Tribal Relations

The Apostle Islands region is in the heart of the ancestral homeland of the Ojibwe people. As such, the area’s significance to Ojibwe traditions and culture cannot be overstated. Ojibwe treaty rights will continue to be honored in the General Management Plan/Wilderness Plan/Environmental Impact Statement — none of the options being considered would impede, prevent, or in any way negate treaty rights. The options being proposed here will not, and indeed cannot, affect the harvesting of plants or plant materials, hunting, fishing (including commercial fishing in Lake Superior), or trapping rights (although with appropriate consultation with affected tribal governments it might affect the manner in which treaty rights are exercised). For Apostle Islands National Lakeshore, these rights are reserved by the tribes and guaranteed by the United States in the treaties of 1842 and 1854, and these rights have been affirmed in a number of court cases, including *State of Wisconsin v. Gurnoe and Lac Courte Oreilles Band of Chippewa Indians v. Voigt*. In addition, for those portions of the park that lie within the boundaries of their reservations, the Red Cliff Band of Lake Superior Chippewa Indians and the Bad River Band of the Lake Superior Tribe of Chippewa Indians enjoy a number of other rights of self-governance and self-determination that are reserved and protected in the Treaty of 1854 and other federal enactments.

## Givens for Issue #1

- The National Park Service would not purposely let the light towers significantly deteriorate or fall down.
- The National Park Service will consider working with others to maintain or preserve historically-significant properties, provided that the public interest is the highest priority.

## Lighthouse vs. Light Station

**Lighthouse** - Generally speaking, this term refers to the structure that once housed the light itself, and any structures that are physically attached to it.

**Light Station** - A light station consists of a lighthouse and all of its associated outbuildings, docks, trails, and clearings. In other words, a lighthouse is just one element of a light station.

## ISSUE 1: THE FUTURE OF THE LIGHT STATIONS

### BACKGROUND

Apostle Island National Lakeshore's six light stations were established between 1856 and 1891 to aid navigation through this portion of Lake Superior. They represent the largest and most diverse collection of light stations in the United States and are collectively listed in the National Register of Historic Places. The light stations are the most visible historic resources in the park, and they are viewed by many as icons inextricably linked to the region's cultural history. Cultural landscape features associated with the light stations (e.g., keeper's quarters, outbuildings, walkways, gardens, and historic archaeological remains) contribute to the overall understanding and appreciation of light station activities and operations during the latter half of the 19th century and the first half of the 20th century. The light stations continue to function as vital navigational aids, demonstrat-



*Old Michigan Lighthouse*

ing their ongoing importance to Great Lakes ship traffic and national commerce.

Ongoing work at the Raspberry Island Light Station is restoring the lighthouse to a standard that will enhance visitor enjoyment and understanding of the park's values and provide for sustainable operations. However, structural stabilization and/or rehabilitation work is

needed for all the other light stations. Natural weathering and erosional processes have resulted in deterioration of the light stations and associated resources, threatening the long-term structural and historical integrity of these properties. In particular, the lighthouses on Michigan and Long islands are deteriorating. Severe shoreline erosion adjacent to the Raspberry Island and Outer Island light stations necessitated the recent installation of rubble rock revetments to stabilize steep slopes and protect critical historic resources.

Vegetation is encroaching into formerly cleared areas around many of the light stations, contributing to the loss of some



*LaPointe Lighthouse, Long Island*



of the cultural landscape as well as the buildup of fire fuels. As a result, wildland fire poses an increased risk to the light stations, although fire frequency on the islands is low.

The issue facing the National Park Service is to determine which level of preservation is appropriate for each of the light stations. Preserving, maintaining, interpreting, and studying the light stations requires a substantial allocation of the park's budget. The logistical difficulties of undertaking historic preservation activities within the park add considerably to costs. The park does not have, and is not likely to receive, sufficient funds to do regular maintenance and other preservation treatments on all of the light stations and associated structures. Management decisions regarding appropriate treatment are hindered by a lack of detailed guidance documentation (e.g., historic structure reports and cultural landscape reports) for most of the light stations. The park also does not have enough staff to interpret and maintain all of the light stations.

### OPTIONS FOR THE LIGHT STATIONS

**Option 1:** Park managers would continue existing management of the light stations, striving to maintain current resource stabilization efforts and visitor experience opportunities. There would be no major improvements in the facilities or their uses, and there could be some slow deterioration of the facilities.

**Option 2:** Park managers would focus on maintaining the Raspberry Island Light Station and its cultural landscape, both for cultural resource protection and for visitor use. Visitor experience opportunities would continue or expand there. Only the most important elements of the other light stations would be stabilized. There could be some deterioration of some facilities in the five other light stations.



*Raspberry Island Light Station from above*



*Outer Island Lighthouse*

**Option 3:** Based on historic significance, cost-efficiency, and other criteria, park managers would prioritize (1) the light stations and then (2) for each light station prioritize the contributing structures and cultural landscapes. Based on the assigned priorities, the National Park Service would determine the level of treatment to give each resource. Light stations and/or contributing structures and landscapes at the low end of the priority list would receive less attention compared to the high priority light stations, contributing structures, and landscapes. If a light station structure were rehabilitated, the interior of the structure would be open for public use.

**Option 4:** The light station facilities could be used as overnight lodging facilities. The National Park Service had an initial economic feasibility study that looked at the possibilities of lodging at three of the light stations. The study raised questions on the economic feasibility due to the high cost of rehabilitation and maintaining the light stations, the high costs of transportation to the islands, and the lack of space in the lighthouses. The planning team is continuing to explore the feasibility of this option.

### Definitions of Cultural Resource Treatment Terms

- **Preservation** focuses on the maintenance and repair of existing historic materials and retention of a property's form as it has evolved over time.
- **Stabilization** renders an unsafe, damaged, or deteriorated property stable while retaining its present form.
- **Rehabilitation** acknowledges the need to alter or add to a historic property to meet continuing or changing uses while retaining the property's historic character.
- **Restoration** is undertaken to depict a property at a particular period of time in its history, while removing evidence of other periods.

## Givens for Issue # 2

- The historic significance of all the properties would be evaluated before making any decisions on their future.
- The park staff would, at a minimum, strive to stabilize all structures that are listed or eligible for listing in the national register.
- The National Park Service will consider working with others to maintain or preserve historically-significant properties, provided that the public interest is the highest priority.

## ISSUE 2: THE FUTURE OF THE LIFE ESTATES AND THE EXPIRED USE AND OCCUPANCY PROPERTIES

### BACKGROUND

The legislation that established Apostle Islands National Lakeshore (PL 91-424) enabled owners with improved properties on the islands to continue residential use of the properties for a term of up to 25 years or for life (i.e., life estates) if they did not wish to sell all of their interests immediately. Those who chose to retain the right of use and occupancy were compensated up front for the fair market value of their properties, minus the value of the retained lease. All of the fixed term use and occupancy properties are now expired and NPS management of them is no longer limited.

but some are in poor condition. Some of the structures have been determined eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places, although historic structure and cultural landscape reports still need to be completed for most of the properties.

When these properties come under NPS management, maintenance tasks will place a new burden on the park staff. Priorities need to be set regarding the uses and level of preservation set for each property, structure, and landscape. Decisions also have to be made on the future of the docks associated with the properties — should they be maintained or removed?



*Bear Island shoreline*

Three life estates still exist on the southeast tip and west end of Sand Island (covering a total of about 59 acres, including Camp Stella and the West Bay Club), one life estate covers the sandspit on the southeast side of Bear Island (about 10.5 acres), and three life estates are on the eastern shore of Rocky Island (about 16 acres, including part of the fishing settlement). All life estate properties are owned by the National Park Service, but leaseholders have the exclusive right of use. Leaseholders are required to maintain the properties.

The structures and landscapes in the park's use and occupancy properties and life estates have been maintained to varying degrees. Many of the structures have been well maintained,

### OPTIONS FOR THE LIFE ESTATE AND THE EXPIRED USE AND OCCUPANCY PROPERTIES

**Option 1:** After the leases expire, structures that are not historically significant would be allowed to molder or be removed (particularly if they pose safety hazards), and the natural values of the sites would be restored. Visitor use would be limited to walking around the landscapes and learning by self-discovery.

**Option 2:** The structures associated with expired leases would be prioritized based on their historical significance, potential for viable adaptive uses, cost, and other criteria. Based on the assigned priorities the National Park



Service would determine the level of treatment to give each resource. Structures and landscapes at the low end of the priority list would receive less attention compared to the high priority structures and landscapes. If the interiors of a structure were rehabilitated, the building would be open to visitors. Public uses of rehabilitated properties could range from being open for interpretation (either unstaffed or staffed for tours) to rustic overnight accommodations, to educational uses.

**Option 3:** NPS managers would focus cultural resource treatment efforts in one geographic area, such as on Sand or Rocky islands. For example, efforts could be focused on preserving the structures associated with Camp Stella and/or the West Bay Club on Sand Island due to their past history. This would focus visitor use into one area and would be a more efficient use of limited staff and budget. Public uses of rehabilitated properties could range from being open for interpretation (either unstaffed or staffed for tours) to rustic overnight accommodations, to educational uses. As a result of this option, treatment efforts in some other areas of the park might be reduced. Other cultural resources would be stabilized and maintained where feasible, but the National Park Service would not rehabilitate or restore them.



*Sandstone shoreline*

### ISSUE 3: APPROPRIATE MANAGEMENT OF THE NONWILDERNESS AREAS ON THE ISLANDS AND WATERS WITHIN THE PARK BOUNDARY

#### BACKGROUND

The nonwilderness areas of the park islands (see figure) are regularly used by sailors, kayakers, powerboaters, sightseers, picnickers, hikers, swimmers, campers, fishermen, hunters, photographers, birdwatchers, divers, skiers, snowshoers, berry pickers, nature students, and lighthouse buffs, all seeking different experiences. Between 2001 and 2005, Apostle Islands National Lakeshore had an average 50,000 island visitors per year; most spent time in the nonwilderness island areas. Many of these visitors toured the islands on the concessioner's cruise boat while the remainder came by private motorboat, kayak, and sailboat. Most visitors went to the islands in the summer (June through September), and most visitors go to more than one island in a day. Most powerboaters and sailboaters congregate at relatively secure anchorages or docks at Stockton, Rocky/South Twin, Raspberry, Oak, and Sand islands. These islands also receive the highest use levels.

Developed campsites are the most numerous visitor facilities in the nonwilderness island areas. Fifty developed campsites are in nonwilderness areas on eight islands. Some of the campsites are clustered, and some are scattered on the islands. Seven of these campsites are group campsites on four islands. Public docks are maintained on 13 islands. There are also small picnic areas separate from campsites and lighthouses, such as on Stockton-Presque Isle and Rocky, Oak, and South Twin islands.

This issue focuses on what changes should occur, if any, in the visitor experience opportunities and facilities on the islands and portions of the islands that are not designated wilderness. These areas, such as Sand Island and Stockton-Presque Isle, are among the most popular areas in the park. Basswood and Sand islands were not included in the designated wilderness in order for the National Park Service to have flexibility in the future to possibly provide limited developments to address a variety of visitor needs and experiences that wilderness designation would preclude.

#### Givens for Issue # 3

- All nonwilderness island shorelines, with the exception of areas with life estates and those areas with periodic temporary closures for wildlife protection, would continue to be open to visitors.
- A tour boat operation, run by a concessioner, would continue to enable visitors to go to selected nonwilderness islands.
- If new campsites were built, they would be developed according to design standards that would protect resources and provide a high-quality visitor experience consistent with the Apostle Islands environment.
- Maintaining or restoring ecological integrity would be a priority in areas not developed for visitors.
- All currently legal forms of transportation in the park will continue under various local, state, and federal rules.
- The National Park Service would strive to ensure that national register-eligible cultural resources receive at least minimum stabilization treatments.
- NPS managers would work closely with the Bad River Band of Lake Superior Tribe of Chippewa Indians on resource or visitor management issues of mutual concern on Long Island.



## Apostle Islands National Lakeshore

U.S. Department of the Interior  
National Park Service  
DSC • July 2006

### Legend

- Visitor Center
- Mainland area (non-wilderness)
- Gaylord Nelson Wilderness
- Island non-wilderness
- ★ Light Station
- D Public Dock



0 1 2 3 4 5 6 Miles





*Stockton Presque Isle dock*

Several factors affect this issue. The overall number of visitors going to the nonwilderness areas on the islands has remained relatively steady over the past 10 years. Campsites are sometimes full on the weekends during the peak season. Visitors often cannot get the campsites they want when they want them, such as on Sand, York, and Oak islands. Some people would like the National Park Service to provide more visitor facilities and/or opportunities for visitors on the islands, while others believe no changes should occur. Kayak outfitters are interested in additional group campsites, such as on Sand, Oak, and Basswood islands. There are only a few such sites, which limits where large kayak groups can go. Desires have also been expressed for more day use picnic areas, such as on Raspberry, Stockton and Sand islands.

Some of the park's campsites are showing signs of overuse. The design or condition of some campsites has led to soil compaction and the loss of vegetation.

Some nonwilderness areas have sensitive resources and are vulnerable to damage from visitors, such as on Stockton-Presque Isle and Long Island. An extensive network of social trails (i.e., those created by visitors) has formed on the Stockton-Presque Isle tombolo, affecting the fragile dune vegetation that grows there. The Stockton Island campground also

occupies prime black bear habitat. With campsites stretched out along the beach, there is the potential for bear-people conflicts. Problems with bears can lead to the closure of campsites, docks, and trails, or to the removal of a bear.

Long Island supports important habitat for migratory birds and piping plovers, an endangered species. Due to its proximity to Ashland and Washburn, the island also is a popular day use area for local residents. Because the island has few signs of being part of a national park unit and rarely has NPS staff present, illegal uses have occurred here, such as the use of jet skis (which are banned in the park). The Bad River Band of the Lake Superior Tribe of Chippewa Indians have in the past expressed interest in issues effecting Long Island.

The logistics of transporting goods and staff via boats to the islands, spread out over some 280,000 acres and with highly changeable weather, makes operation of the park very challenging — and costly. The park staff does not have sufficient funds or enough people to adequately meet all of the needs it faces in the nonwilderness areas, including maintaining current campsites, trails, docks, and other visitor and administrative facilities, providing interpretive and visitor protection services, and inventorying, monitoring and managing resources. As a result, difficult decisions need to be regularly made on what work gets done and what is put off. Adding new facilities will increase demands and costs for the park staff.

## OPTIONS FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF THE NONWILDERNESS AREAS AND THE WATERS WITHIN THE PARK BOUNDARY

The options that follow focus on ways to reach the islands, educational/interpretive opportunities, camping opportunities, hiking opportunities, and management of cultural resources.

**Option 1:** NPS managers would continue existing management priorities, striving to maintain current resource conditions and visitor experience opportunities to the extent possible. Assuming funding levels are maintained, there would be no significant changes in visitor uses or facilities.

**Option 2:** NPS managers would encourage or, if funds were available, subsidize new ways to make it easier for people who don't go to

"...The nonwilderness areas of the park islands (see map page 10) are regularly used by sailors, kayakers, powerboaters, sightseers, picnickers, hikers, swimmers, campers, fishermen, hunters, photographers, birdwatchers, divers, skiers, snowshoers, berry pickers, nature students, and lighthouse buffs, all seeking different experiences.."



*"Some nonwilderness areas have sensitive resources and are vulnerable to damage from visitors, such as on Stockton-Presque Isle and Long Island. An extensive network of social trails (i.e., those created by visitors) has formed on the Stockton-Presque Isle tombolo, affecting the fragile dune vegetation that grows there."*



*Julian Bay trail*

the islands to have an island experience. One possibility includes encouraging a low-cost boat shuttle to a nearby island. To support these visitors, a modest amount of new infrastructure might be built in some of the nonwilderness areas to accommodate visitors (e.g., picnic shelters, visitor contact stations).

**Option 3:** NPS managers would provide more convenient opportunities for powerboaters to experience the islands under a greater variety of weather and lake conditions by improving or expanding existing docks. This would result in construction and increased maintenance costs.

**Option 4:** NPS managers would provide new or different structured education/interpretive opportunities or facilities — the focus of the existing education/interpretative program would broaden to reflect different park stories. For example, additional attention might be devoted to interpreting the stories of Native Americans, or on the “rewilding” of the islands, using methods not usually possible in wilderness.

**Option 5:** NPS managers would provide more designated individual campsites with infrastructure to provide resource protection (e.g., bear locker, tent pad, fire ring, and privy) and/or visitor amenities (e.g., picnic table) in nonwilderness areas.

**Option 6:** More designated group campsites would be provided in the nonwilderness island areas.

**Option 7:** Campsite design would be improved and/or campsites would be relocated to provide more resource protection and to address visitor crowding. For example, additional attention would be devoted to addressing the resource problems occurring at the Stockton-Presque Isle campground.

**Option 8:** NPS managers would provide new or different hiking opportunities in nonwilderness areas.

**Option 9:** NPS managers would stabilize, and potentially rehabilitate, and interpret cultural resources that are not primary visitor attractions (e.g., farmsteads, logging camps).



*Cat Island sandspit panorama*



## ISSUE 4: APPROPRIATE MANAGEMENT OF THE WILDERNESS AREA

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### BACKGROUND

Congress designated approximately 33,500 acres of Apostle Islands National Lakeshore as the Gaylord Nelson Wilderness in 2004 (see map on page 10).

The natural resources in most of the wilderness area are in good condition. Comparatively little is known about cultural resources in this area, particularly archeological resources. The islands in the wilderness area provide excellent opportunities for “getting away from it all” and enjoying the quiet, wildness, and inspiration that is unique to the islands. There are outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive, unconfined recreation.

Visitors venturing into the wilderness area generally spend a relatively short time there (with the exception of campers). Most of the different types of users described for the nonwilderness area also visit the wilderness area (e.g., hunters, sailors, kayakers, and powerboaters).

There is minimal development in the wilderness area. Fourteen designated campsites, including one group campsite, are located on nine islands. About 55 miles of unpaved foot trails are maintained on the islands, most (about 36 miles) of which are in the wilderness area.

Issue 4 focuses on what changes should occur, if any, in the visitor experience opportunities and visitor facilities and in the natural resource conditions on the islands and portions of the islands that are designated wilderness.

Several factors affect this issue. Although still a relatively small percentage of overall island visitors, the number of visitors spending time in the wilderness area has been holding steady or increasing in some areas over time. In particular, the number of kayakers, who can land and camp along many of the islands’ shorelines, have been increasing.

Some wilderness campsites are showing signs of overuse. Like the nonwilderness campsites, the design or condition of some wilderness campsites has led to resource impacts. In the camping

### Givens for Issue # 4

- All options are consistent with the Wilderness Act and NPS policy and regulations for management and use of wilderness areas. (See *NPS Management Policies 2001* at <<http://www.nps.gov/policy/mp/policies.pdf>>. Chapter 6 describes NPS policies on wilderness management.)
- No new docks or group campsites would be built in or adjacent to the wilderness area because concentrating visitors, and the infrastructure required to prevent resource damage due to large groups, violates the spirit of wilderness designation.
- NPS managers would continue to provide opportunities for visitors to camp in the wilderness area.
- NPS managers would stabilize and continue to manage national register-eligible properties in the wilderness area for their cultural values.
- NPS staff would continue to maintain existing campsites and trails, although some may be relocated or redesigned for resource protection purposes.
- All beaches, including those adjacent to wilderness, will remain open to the beaching of boats.



## Wild or Natural?

The 1964 Wilderness Act defines wilderness as a place that “generally appears to have been affected primarily by the forces of nature, with the imprint of man’s work substantially unnoticeable.” Although these ideas have much in common, they aren’t the same. As established by the Act, the objectives to manage wilderness for ecological conditions (the forces of nature) and for wildness (minimal imprint of man’s work) can be in conflict. Notwithstanding the island’s long and continuing history of use by Native Americans and the park’s embrace of its history in the Gaylord Nelson Wilderness, the National Park Service must grapple with how to manage those parts of the wilderness where cultural resources are not present.

Two key terms need to be considered in determining how to manage wilderness areas:

**Wild** — untrammeled; uncontrolled; unconstrained; without influence or sign of people; on its own terms; self-willed; free.

**Natural** — unimpaired; ecologically intact, with the full complement of native species; sustainable; unpolluted.

Although hands-off management was probably once sufficient to keep wilderness both natural and wild, we now realize that human use of the landscape has left some areas with nonnative or invasive plants,

(Continued on facing page)

zones that do not have designated campsites, people sometimes repeatedly camp in the same desirable locations near beaches on some islands, resulting in “unofficial” campsites with compacted soils, disturbed vegetation, trash, and human waste.

Some areas in the wilderness have sensitive resources and are vulnerable to damage from visitors, such as sandscapes on Outer and Cat islands.

As in the nonwilderness areas, the logistics of transporting goods and staff via boats to the islands is very challenging and costly.

## OPTIONS FOR MANAGEMENT OF THE WILDERNESS AREA

**Option 1:** NPS managers would continue existing management priorities, striving to maintain current resource conditions and visitor experience opportunities to the extent possible. Assuming funding levels are maintained, there would be no significant changes in visitor uses or facilities. There would continue to be a mixture of scattered and clustered designated campsites and zoned (undesignated) camping.



*Relaxing on Outer Island*

**Option 2:** New designated campsites would be established, based on such criteria as interest/demand for new campsites, resource sensitivity of sites, and signs of previous human disturbance. The emphasis would be on sites being clustered to minimize resource impacts, keep maintenance costs as low as possible, and minimize fragmentation of the wilderness resource. The designated campsites would have the same amenities as the existing designated campsites in the wilderness area. (The implication of option 2 is that there would be more opportunity for people to camp in the wilderness area but possibly less solitude for those seeking to camp away from other people. The



*Campfire in the moonlight on Outer Island*

people using these sites would also have less solitude than those using sites constructed under option 3.)

**Option 3:** New designated wilderness campsites would be based on the same criteria as option 2, but in this option there would be an emphasis on individual dispersed sites. The designated campsites would have the same amenities as the existing designated campsites in the wilderness area. (The implication is that there would be more opportunity for people to camp in the wilderness area but possibly less solitude for those seeking to camp away from other people in undesignated camping zones. The wilderness area would be more fragmented with developments, and campsite maintenance costs would be higher in option 3.)

**Option 4:** Some new trails in the wilderness area would be built and maintained based on such criteria as interest/demand for new trails and resource sensitivity of the area.





*Hokenson dock at Little Sand Bay*

## ISSUE 5: APPROPRIATE MANAGEMENT OF THE MAINLAND UNIT

### BACKGROUND

This issue only examines the future of NPS lands on the mainland within the park boundary — not the mainland visitor centers and administrative facilities.

The mainland portion of Apostle Islands National Lakeshore consists of a 12-mile narrow strip of shoreline, often only 0.25 mile wide, lying between Little Sand Bay and Meyers Beach. Two-thirds of the mainland unit falls within the boundaries of the Red Cliff Indian Reservation. The mainland unit is fragmented by four-wheel drive roads and nonfederal land. Development of second homes is expected to continue increasing along the boundary of the mainland.

Of the approximately 150,000 to 200,000 visitors that spend time in the park, about 60% visit the mainland unit or the Bayfield visitor center. During the past 10 years use levels have increased on the mainland. Almost all of the use of the mainland unit occurs at its two ends, which are easily accessible by road. The park staff maintains visitor facilities at Little Sand Bay, including a visitor center, restrooms, kayak launch site, dock, picnic area, and historic buildings (the Hokenson Brothers fishery). The Town of Russell has an 11-acre inholding within the park at Little Sand Bay and maintains a boat launch, campground, small parking area, and baseball field next to the NPS facilities.

Meyers Beach has recently become a popular day use area. In the summer visitors walk along the beach, picnic, swim, and launch kayaks.



*Hokenson Brothers Fishery*

compacted soils, artificial fire regimes, trash piles, etc. The National Park Service is fully committed to the preservation of the tangible remnants that are historically significant (an equally challenging concept, also defined in federal law). But we are faced in some other cases with the dilemma of whether to attempt to restore natural conditions or to leave an area alone. If we choose the latter path, some areas will naturally restore themselves over time, but other areas are likely to remain in an unnatural state without active intervention.

An important consideration in the new management plan will be to determine if and when and under what conditions we should be intervening in wilderness. Which is more important to you in the Gaylord Nelson Wilderness in Apostle Islands National Lakeshore — wildness or naturalness? There's an opportunity for you to weigh in on this question on the comment page.

### Givens for Issue 5

- NPS managers would work closely with neighboring jurisdictions to encourage compatible land uses adjacent to the park.
- NPS managers would work closely with the Red Cliff Band of Lake Superior Chippewa Indians on resource and visitor management issues of mutual concern on those areas of the mainland unit within the boundaries of the Red Cliff reservation.
- NPS managers would continue to maintain some type of visitor facilities at Little Sand Bay and Meyers Beach.
- Park managers would continue to work with the Town of Russell to address mutual issues and improve the quality of the visitor experience at Little Sand Bay.



*Concession Boat*

People also hike the 4.5-mile Lakeshore Trail, which starts at Meyers Beach. In the winter this is the only part of the park that receives much use, with people walking out to see the sea caves along the park shoreline or hiking along the Lakeshore Trail. In 2005 several improvements were made to the Meyers Beach area. The park staff maintains the paved road, parking areas, stairway to the beach, restrooms, interpretive signs, picnic area, trails, and a campsite at the end of the Lakeshore Trail.

Issue 5 focuses on what visitor experience opportunities should be offered on the mainland unit. What changes should occur, if any, in the current visitor experience opportunities and related visitor facilities? Should the mainland provide its own recreational and educational/interpretive opportunities, distinct from the islands, or should the mainland primarily serve as a portal for visitors going out to the islands?

### OPTIONS FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF THE MAINLAND UNIT

**Option 1:** The park staff would continue existing management priorities, striving to maintain current resource conditions and visitor experience opportunities as well as it can. Assuming funding levels are maintained, there would be no significant changes in visitor uses or facilities.

**Option 2:** A diverse range of recreational and interpretive opportunities would be provided on the mainland. Examples of new opportunities could include providing new kayak campsites or drive-in campsites at locations accessible by existing roads; extending the Lakeshore Trail from its present terminus to Little Sand Bay; improving or building new trails, such as universally accessible trails; and providing new wayside exhibits and/or staffed interpretive programs. An implication of extending the Lakeshore Trail all the way to Little Sand Bay is that it would require visitors to cross the Sand River, either necessitating the construction of a bridge or requiring visitors to wade the river.

**Option 3:** Park managers would focus on providing recreation and interpretive/educational opportunities that can only be found in the park and not elsewhere in the region. The opportunities would be lake-oriented and nature-based, emphasizing primitive recreation. Examples of such opportunities could include offering water trails and kayak campgrounds and providing more interpretation of the Hokenson Brothers fishery, and the history of Native American presence in the area.



## ISSUE 6: FUTURE OF THE MAINLAND NPS VISITOR CENTERS

### BACKGROUND

Two mainland visitor centers are operated by the National Park Service. The main park visitor center is in Bayfield, while a smaller visitor center is at Little Sand Bay. In addition, the National Park Service cooperates in the operation of the multiagency Northern Great Lakes Visitor Center near Ashland.

The Bayfield visitor center is in the historic county courthouse building that is leased from the city of Bayfield. In the 1970s the city and a group of concerned citizens rallied to restore the courthouse and ensure its long-term preservation. Although the NPS presence in the building has helped in that regard, the building is several blocks from the waterfront where most tourists congregate, and only about 10 to 15% of the 150,000 to 200,000 visitors coming to the park actually stop at the visitor center. An even smaller fraction of Bayfield's tourists come to the Bayfield visitor center. The space at the Bayfield visitor center is cramped for visitor exhibits and the bookstore. The building also has no room for storage, expansion, or sharing space with any partners.

The Little Sand Bay visitor center is a seasonal operation at a major visitor site. It is a small

facility and does not have adequate space for visitor exhibits. The building has physically deteriorated and cannot cost-effectively be restored.

The Northern Great Lakes Visitor Center is a relatively new facility with excellent space for exhibits, visitor information services, and education programs. The mission of the visitor center is to help people connect with the historic, cultural, and natural resources of the Northern Great Lakes region. Thus, the center has a much broader focus than just the park. The National Park Service helps fund and staff this visitor center as part of a partnership with the U.S. Forest Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and state and local organizations. NPS funding for that partnership vies with funding for the rest of the park, and therefore is not likely to increase beyond the current level. Although many tourists stop at the visitor center, it is not clear how many park visitors use this facility, which is not near the park.

Issue 6 looks at whether or not the existing NPS mainland visitor centers are providing services (e.g., visitor orientation, interpretation, assistance) effectively. In an age of tight budgets, are all of these visitor centers needed? Are they being used by visitors and meeting their needs? Or are there other possibilities for the operation of the mainland visitor centers?

### Givens for Issue 6

- The National Park Service would continue its partnership in operating the Northern Great Lakes Visitor Center.
- Regardless of the future of the visitor centers, visitors would still be able to obtain information on the park at Little Sand Bay and in Bayfield.
- The purchase of any lands for visitor facilities outside of the existing NPS boundaries of the mainland unit would likely require congressional legislation.
- Leasing facilities, regardless of how good the relationship is between the NPS and the landlord, subjects the park to uncertainty and limits flexibility.
- Owning facilities involves capital costs and requires the NPS to be responsible for all facility maintenance.



*Apostle Islands Visitor Center in Bayfield*

"...Although the NPS presence in the building (Bayfield Visitor Center) has helped in that regard, the building is several blocks from the waterfront where most tourists congregate, and only about 10 to 15% of the 150,000 to 200,000 visitors coming to the park actually stop at the visitor center. An even smaller fraction of Bayfield's tourists come to the Bayfield visitor center".



Bayfield



Little Sand Bay Visitor Center

## OPTIONS FOR THE FUTURE OF THE MAINLAND VISITOR CENTERS

**Option 1:** NPS managers would continue current operations, with facilities in Bayfield and Little Sand Bay. However, due to its condition the Little Sand Bay visitor center would eventually need to be replaced.

**Option 2:** Current operations with facilities in Bayfield and at Little Sand Bay would continue, but both facilities would be replaced. A new Bayfield visitor center, on the waterfront or elsewhere, could serve as a focal point for visitors to Bayfield and be developed in full or partial partnership with other entities (e.g., the city, the chamber of commerce). The new Bayfield facility could be leased or owned by the National Park Service.

**Option 3:** The two visitor centers would be consolidated into one location in Bayfield. The new visitor center might be either at the current site or at another site, such as on or near the waterfront. A new consolidated Bayfield visitor center (either leased or owned by the National Park Service) could serve as a focal point for visitors to Bayfield and be developed in full or partial

partnership with other entities (e.g., the city, chamber of commerce). The courthouse facility is not large enough to serve this purpose. Some type of visitor facility, either unstaffed or occasionally staffed, would be present at Little Sand Bay.

**Option 4:** The two visitor centers would be consolidated into one site outside of Bayfield, such as at Little Sand Bay or on other lands not currently within NPS ownership near Bayfield. If the site were on the waterfront, a launch site for boats and kayaks could be provided. The facility could be leased or owned by the National Park Service.



Exhibits at Bayfield Visitor Center



## ISSUE 7: FUTURE OF NPS OPERATIONAL (ADMINISTRATIVE) FACILITIES ON THE MAINLAND

### BACKGROUND

The National Park Service has administrative facilities in the Bayfield visitor center (park headquarters), at Little Sand Bay, and at Roys Point. Most of the park administrative offices are in the Bayfield headquarters/visitor center. This historic building is leased from the city. There is little space for growth in staff in the building. Because the headquarters does not include a marina on the waterfront and is across the peninsula from the mainland unit, staff must frequently drive either 2 miles to Roys Point or 13 miles to Little Sand Bay.

The Little Sand Bay administrative facilities consist of seasonal dormitories, docks, fuel facilities, artifact storage space, offices for several rangers, and a fire cache. All of the structures were designed as seasonal facilities and are of marginal quality and construction.



*Little Sand Bay*

Roys Point has a large warehouse (which also provides offices for protection and maintenance staff), docks, fuel facilities, workshops, and storage space for boats, vehicles, and equipment. Operations at Roys Point are being hemmed in by private residential and marina development on all sides. The Roys Point facilities are leased and it is not certain that the National Park Service will be able to continue the lease, which expires in 2008.

Issue 7 focuses on whether or not the existing administrative facilities are functioning effectively and efficiently, meeting the needs of both park staff and visitors. With the facilities being in the three locations mentioned above, the park staff is fragmented. The lack of a central facility means that critical tools, equipment, and supplies must be stored in several



*Roys Point facilities*

locations. Staff must travel back and forth between the facilities. Likewise, the ability of the park staff to respond to emergencies (e.g., search and rescue, and law enforcement) is not as effective as it could be due to the staff being scattered on the mainland. Roys Point has an advantage of being a good location to access the islands to respond to an emergency; the response time from Bayfield is slightly longer. From Little Sand Bay the response time to most of the islands is currently much longer due to the time it takes park staff to drive to Little Sand Bay. To resolve this issue, the planning team is looking at changes in the mainland administrative facilities that would improve the park's operation and reduce costs.

### Givens for Issue 7

- An administrative facility is needed on the mainland to operate the park. At a minimum, space and supplies for offices, boats, vehicles, fire equipment, search and rescue equipment, a fuel facility, workshops, and a maintenance yard are all needed on the mainland.
- The purchase of any lands for administrative facilities outside the existing park boundary would likely require congressional legislation.
- Leasing facilities, regardless of how good the relationship is between the NPS and the landlord, subjects the park to uncertainty and limits flexibility.
- Owning facilities involves capital costs and requires the NPS to be responsible for all facility maintenance.
- Construction of any new marina facilities will require coordination and permitting with the appropriate federal, state, and local agencies.



*Outer Island sandspit*

Wild landscapes in the  
greatest of lakes.

Land of pine and hemlock,  
eagle and bear.

Ancestral home of the Ojibwe  
people.

## OPTIONS FOR THE FUTURE OF THE NPS MAINLAND ADMINISTRATIVE/ OPERATIONAL FACILITIES

**Option 1:** Park managers would continue using the current administrative/operational facilities in Bayfield, Little Sand Bay, and Roys Point — no major changes would occur. (This assumes that the Roys Point lease is renewed.)

**Option 2:** Administrative/operational facilities would be consolidated and combined with visitor facilities in one complex in Bayfield, preferably somewhere on the waterfront. This new facility either would be developed or leased by the National Park Service, possibly in cooperation with other partners in the city.

**Option 3:** Administrative facilities would be consolidated elsewhere on the mainland, either on NPS or non NPS lands. The new site would include a marina for NPS boats. If it were built on non-NPS lands, the site either would be leased or bought by the National Park Service.



*West end of Little Sand Bay Harbor*



## ISSUES AND ACTIONS NOT BEING CONSIDERED IN THE GENERAL MANAGEMENT PLAN

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The planning team has identified a couple of park issues and possible actions that are not expected to be addressed in the general management plan:

- **The terms of life estates on use and occupancy properties will not be extended or changed:** It was the intent of Congress when the park was established to fully integrate these properties into the park when the contracts expired.

- **Boundary changes in Lake Superior are not anticipated:** Under the enabling legislation establishing Apostle Islands National Lakeshore, the park boundary extends ¼ mile from the shoreline of the mainland unit and around each island. Although many visitors probably consider the waters between the islands to be part of the park, in fact the National Park Service has jurisdiction of over less than 15% of the waters within the



*Lake Superior*

entire archipelago. Some have argued that the boundary should be changed to include the waters between the islands: this would reduce the ambiguity for both visitors and managers of what is in and outside the park; enable the National Park Service to enforce a consistent set of rules and activities; protect more water

resources; and provide formal recognition for patrols and emergency response activities park staff already perform. Some do not want to see an increase in NPS jurisdiction in this area: they believe it could increase government regulation between islands or they feel the NPS can't do an adequate job of patrolling or protecting the waters they already have. In any case, only a few people seemed to think the issue was worth discussing during the public scoping period, so it will not be addressed further in the GMP.



*Lone sailboat on Lake Superior*

The nation's finest collection of historic lighthouses.

Paradise for campers, boaters, and kayakers.

This and more...

... The Apostle Islands



*Campsite*

The Apostle Islands National Lakeshore includes 69,372 acres, of which 27,064 are submerged. Of the 42,308 acres above the waterline, 2,592 are on the mainland, while 39,716 are on the islands.

<(http://www.nps.gov/apis/acreage.htm)>

## THE NEXT STEPS

Members of the NPS planning team will be holding public meetings later this summer to get views on the issues and options presented in this newsletter. After analyzing all of the public comments, the planning team will develop a set of overall alternatives for managing Apostle Islands National Lakeshore during the next 20 years. Each alternative will address all of the issues raised in this newsletter. After a preliminary impact analysis is done for each of the alternatives, the planning team will then craft a preferred alternative for the park.

The planning team will spend most of 2007 writing the *Draft General Management Plan / Wilderness Management Plan / Environmental Impact Statement*, and sending the draft through various internal agency reviews. We expect the draft document to be ready for public review in winter 2007–2008.

If you have any questions about the status of the general management plan, you can log on to the park's web site <(www.nps.gov/apis/gmp.htm)> or you can call Jim Nepstad, the Chief of Planning and Resource Management, at 715/779-3398, ext. 102.

## 2006 GENERAL MANAGEMENT PLAN OPEN HOUSES

The National Park Service invites the public to attend a series of open houses related to the *General Management Plan/Wilderness Management Plan/Environmental Impact Statement* for Apostle Islands National Lakeshore. This plan will direct the management of the park for the next 15-20 years, so public input is critical. Park staff will be available to discuss the planning process, answer your questions, and to listen to your suggestions.

More information on the General Management Plan for Apostle Islands National Lakeshore, including the latest newsletter and study schedule, will be available at the open houses, or at <www.nps.gov/apis/gmp.htm.> We hope to see you at one of the open houses listed below!

DATE	LOCATION	TIME
Saturday August 5, 2006 Out in the park!	Stockton Island Presque Isle Visitor Contact Station Apostle Islands National Lakeshore	6:00 pm-8:00 pm
Monday August 7, 2006 Red Cliff, WI.	Red Cliff Bingo Hall 88705 Highway 13 Red Cliff, WI. 54814	2:00 pm-4:00 pm
Monday August 7, 2006 Bayfield, WI.	Apostle Islands NL Visitor Center 415 Washington Avenue Bayfield, WI. 54814	5:00 pm-7:00 pm
Tuesday August 8, 2006 Odanah, WI.	Chief Blackbird Center Conference Room C Odanah, WI. 54861	2:00 pm-4:00 pm
Tuesday August 8, 2006 Ashland, WI.	Northern Great Lakes Visitor Center Near junction of Highways 2 and 13 Ashland, WI. 54806	6:00 pm-8:00 pm
Wednesday August 9, 2006 Madison, WI.	REI - Madison 7483 West Towne Way Madison, WI. 53719	6:00 pm-8:00pm
Thursday August 10, 2006 Twin Cities, MN.	REI - Bloomington 750 West American Blvd Bloomington, MN. 55420	6:00 pm-8:00 pm
Friday August 11, 2006 Duluth, MN.	Gander Mountain 4275 Haines Road Hermantown, MN. 55811	4:00 pm-6:00 pm



## SCHEDULE

	PLANNING ACTIVITY	DATES	PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT OPPORTUNITIES
1	<b>Set the stage for planning:</b> Reaffirm purpose, significance, and mission of the park; determine issues and concerns.	September 2004 to October 2005	Attend public meetings and voice your concern using a response form.
2	<b>Develop preliminary management options and overall management alternatives (we are at this stage):</b> Identify a range of reasonable options for the park's future, assess their effects, analyze public reactions, and develop overall management alternatives.	November 2005 to December 2006	Provide comments on the initial alternatives, using a response form. Attend public meetings and provide comments.
3	<b>Prepare and publish <i>Draft General Management/Wilderness Plan/Environmental Impact Statement</i>:</b> Prepare draft describing the management alternatives, and impacts; distribute to the public.	January 2006 to February 2008	Provide written comments on the draft document. Attend public meetings and provide comments.
4	<b>Revise and publish <i>Draft General Management Plan/Wilderness Study/Environmental Impact Statement</i>:</b> Analyze comments, prepare responses to comments, revise draft document, distribute to the public.	March 2008 to March 2009	
6	<b>Implement the approved plan:</b> Prepare and issue Record of Decision and implement plan as funding allows.	Spring 2009 and beyond	Stay involved throughout the implementation of the approved plan.



Sunset from Quarry Bay

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